

Bishop Amateur Radio Club December Minutes – meeting of December 9, 2015.

Mike Johnson (KJ6WXM) concluded a very short Eastern Sierra 4x4 Club business meeting and then turned the floor over to John Shepherd (AD6NR) at about 7pm. John had no meeting agenda and asked the group for any of their business items for the BARC. Long silence. Formal BARC meeting was concluded.

Jon Patzer, NW6C, Secretary, BARC Inc.

Additional Notes:

This was a joint pot luck, year-end and Christmas meeting with optional gift exchange with the ES4x4 and BARC clubs. I (Jon) showed up about 6:30. Official start time was 6pm, with earlier arrivals encouraged to help set up the hall. The line for food was already in motion. It looked like really good attendance from both clubs. Adrian (N6ZA) was just behind me arriving at the meeting site, and we took the last two visitor parking places.

My late arrival was partly due to a dash up to the Silver Peak radio site in the hope of resolving really annoying spurious key ups on the Silver to Mazourka link, before snow blocked access. These key ups seemed to have been made a lot worse after the last trip to Silver involving lengthening the .94 repeater hang time and installing weather striping on the entry door. John had found a programming mistake on the Kenwood repeater that called for “carrier” squelch instead of the desired “tone” squelch. Unfortunately, changing that parameter on the Kenwood did not change the repeater operation, apparently because that function had been taken over by the external (CAT 400) repeater controller. Further testing established that the tone squelch on the link transceiver (GM300) was also not functioning. This was corrected by hanging up the GM300 microphone. A switch on the back of the Motorola microphone is set up to disable the tone squelch when the microphone is lifted “off hook” so that the radio operator is made aware of ongoing radio traffic on that frequency (using a different security tone) prior to transmitting. It was decided that the whole system needed to be sorted out on a shop bench, which in turn meant removing the CAT. John had a duplicate Kenwood and Motorola in his shack, but no duplicate CAT 400.

Phantom keying of the repeaters has greatly diminished since that trip, although we haven't really determined why. John has prepared external control box interfaces, similar to the original, pre-repeater controller links, to be installed on Silver Peak. These would allow removal of the CAT 400 for testing while still retaining operation of the links. Now all that is needed is access to the site.

Future plans involve installing a wireless network as described in the November 2015 issue of QST - “High Speed Wireless Networking in the UHF and Microwave Bands”. This will hopefully allow linking to Mammoth, Tonopah (and maybe Dyer), Mazourka, and the internet. Our Silver site currently has three independent internet linked systems – 920 MHz, Allstar, and APRS. Having an internet port in our Silver Peak building would eliminate the radio links now used to connect these systems to service in the Valley.

Back to the **joint meeting**: Great food, great group, lots of fun with the gift exchange. I still have leftovers in my fridge. Phil (K0RVD) who took care of the hall arrangements was feeling ill and went home a little early. He has since recovered. Members completely cleared the meeting hall before the 9pm time set by Highlands Park.